

# **2005 YMCA / Steps Community Collaborative Projects**

## **Overview**

In 2005, 25 YMCA / Steps Community Collaborative Projects have been implemented throughout the country. Each community participating in a project received a small amount of funds based on an application developed by the local YMCA and Steps Program. Funds were made available through YMCA of the USA's national partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Steps to a HealthierUS Cooperative Agreement Program. This partnership involves 18 national organizations working together to support the communities.

The goal of the national partnership is to expand community capacity to identify and promote programs that encourage small behavioral changes, leading to a reduction of some of the leading causes of death including heart disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and cancer, as well as the control of risk factors such as poor nutrition, physical inactivity, and tobacco use and exposure.

## **Summary of YMCA / Steps Community Collaborative Projects**

### ***States:***

#### **Steps to a Healthier New York**

**Broome County YMCA / Broome County Steps:** This partnership's focus will be on increasing physical activity opportunities for elderly and disabled populations who have a low level of physical activity and are at risk for developing diabetes. The population group was identified in the Broome County Steps Community Action Plan as needing additional access to physical activity venues such as walking and aquatic programs. The "Mission Meltaway" program, Broome County Walks and "Give Me 5" campaign are all components of the partnership, helping to reduce disease and disability in this population. Funds will also be used to build a program that will use lift equipment in the aquatics area, which will increase access to a venue that is currently unavailable but very requested and needed for this population. The result will allow for an increase in the number of individuals able to participate in physical activity. YMCA staff is active members in the Steps Consortium.

**Watertown Family YMCA / Steps Initiative in Jefferson County:** This partnership will focus on children with the "Kids NutriFit" program, engaging 5- to 12-year-old children in 21 after-school sites and 150-200 youth in the summer program. Staff will be trained to work with children in action-oriented game movements like walking, climbing, jumping, and catch/throwing, along with education about proper nutrition. The goal will be to have children gain movement skills that will carry over to the home environment, to be repeated without parent or teacher involvement. With 65% of this age group qualifying for a free/reduced school lunch program and 30% living below poverty level, there is a need for quality, affordable programs such as this to enhance the lives of these children. YMCA staff serves on the North County Steps Forward Steering Committee and actively participate in the Consortia meetings.

**Jamestown Area YMCA / Steps Initiative in Chautauqua County:** In the Chautauqua Steps to a Healthier NY Community Action Plan, a need for weight management programs at low or no cost for citizens was identified. Since there is no central place for health and wellness services like this, the YMCA will expand its Wellness Resources Center (WRC) to provide regular seminars for low-income residents that don't have access to the services. Scholarships are also offered to selected WRC participants for YMCA membership. This ensures participants have long-term support for lifestyle behavioral changes. Another component of the WRC will be to provide "Ways to Increase Activity in Children" training for Latino daycare providers by bilingual YMCA staff. In addition, a Steps Resources Guide will be developed that describes all healthcare provider offices in the county. The guide will be distributed to local healthcare providers to use when advising patients about services available in the area. The YMCA houses a Steps Program coordinator who attends staff meetings, and YMCA staff attends Steps Consortium and Physical Activity Workgroup meetings.

**Rockland County YMCA / Steps Initiative in Rockland Department of Health:** This partnership will address the need for improved nutrition as identified in year two of the Steps Community Action Plan. A primary focus of this effort will be to work with childcare programs to improve nutrition offerings at snack time. A training and pilot program called "Healthy Snack Wednesdays" will be provided to daycare sites that serve 700 children in grades K-5. The pilot will be evaluated and improvements made as needed, which will lead to broad implementation in fall 2005. Steps and YMCA staff have been in ongoing discussions about collaborative opportunities.

### **Steps to a Healthier Washington**

**Clark County Family YMCA / Steps to a Healthier Clark County:** As part of the Steps Community Action Plan, this partnership will expand a "Passport to Wellness" program to include a focus on low-income groups, workforce and faith-based organizations. The program provides individual assessments and educational opportunities that identify select lifestyle habits and deliver targeted education/training based on each individual's lifestyle. The partnership works with the Southwest Washington Medical Center which operates the "Passport to Wellness" program. Members of Clark County Family YMCA serve on the Steps Leadership team, structural committees, the steering committee, and are responsible for many "task force" duties for the Worksite Wellness and School Initiative teams.

**Wenatchee Valley YMCA / Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan Counties:** Inactivity and poor nutrition were identified in the Steps Community Action Plan as priority areas for students based on the Washington Healthy Youth Survey of 2002. To meet these challenges, the YMCA operates a "Youth Teen Exercise Extreme" program that addresses inactivity and poor nutrition. With project funds, a written curriculum and portable fitness gear will be integrated into the program for families to replicate in off-site venues. The enhanced program will be implemented along with an assessment process to evaluate and make improvements. YMCA staff serves as part of the Steps Leadership group, Community Work group and Diabetes Risk Assessment.

**South Sound YMCA / Thurston County:** South Sound YMCA staff has been a member of the Thurston County Steps Community Consortium since it was established. The partnership will grow stronger with the addition of this collaboration which will focus on one of the Steps Annual Actions Plan's priorities of increasing access to physical activity opportunities in the community. These opportunities will include building walking teams at work sites, homes and community areas so people can engage in walking on a regular, consistent basis. Promotional and education materials, training and services will be developed and provided to promote the program and engage community members.

**YMCA of the Inland Northwest / Colville Confederated Tribes Steps Initiative:** This is a unique partnership between YMCA of the Inland Northwest in Spokane, Wash., and the Colville Confederated Tribes located 60 miles from Spokane on the Colville Indian Reservation. The Inland Northwest YMCA has a long history of working with Native Americans, so they knew the importance of "stretching" their coverage to build this relationship. The partnership will work to plan and develop a health and fitness program addressing tribal needs, including the following: techniques to diminish obesity and diabetes; educational materials for the Tribes Steps Community; community center fitness staff training; and fitness appliances with training on their use and recommendations for future purchases.

### **Steps to a HealthierUS Colorado**

**YMCA of Metropolitan Denver / Steps to a Healthier Mesa County:** Increasing accessibility and opportunities for physical activity, wellness information and health promotion services in Mesa County was identified as a priority by the Mesa County Community Action Plan's Asthma, Diabetes, and Obesity task forces. To meet this challenge, a market study will be conducted to determine the feasibility of establishing a YMCA facility and services in Grand Junction, the largest city in the county. The partnership will work with a market survey group to conduct the study, analyze finds and implement results. This process and information will have immediate benefits such as establishing a relationship with businesses and community leaders that could lead to creating a sustainable health and wellness infrastructure, new health-related jobs, internship opportunities for Mesa County residents and Mesa State College students, and an increase in availability of quality health promotion and wellness services. Two Mesa county philanthropists have committed \$15,000 to support this initiative.

**YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region / Steps to a Healthier Teller:** This partnership will focus on achieving objective 2B of the Community Actions Plan which is, "By September 30, 2005, increase the number of adults by 140 who engage regularly, preferably daily, in moderate physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day." The YMCA will collaborate on activity/action Step 5 which is to promote "TV Turnoff Week" in the community. The YMCA will serve as the official sponsor of the kick-off event that will engage families in a variety of community activities to accomplish objectives such as providing an obstacle course and climbing wall for children and their families, opening up Camp Shady Brook so families can use physical activity areas, and inviting families to learn more about the YMCA.

**Ed & Ruth Lehman YMCA / Weld County Steps Program:** The YMCA is located in Boulder county next to Weld, and prior to this partnership, the YMCA hadn't provided services in Boulder County. Now that a relationship has been established, the YMCA is participating in the Steps Community Consortium and the Physical Activity and Nutrition committee. The YMCA will work with the community to meet one of the Steps Community Action Plan's objectives of expanding services to southwest Weld County. The YMCA will also work to increase physical activity services in community locations such as "5-A-Day" and "Colorado on the Move". A Physical Activity Programs and Services Guide will be developed and distributed to increase awareness about the availability of new physical activity services.

**YMCA of Pueblo / Steps to a Healthier Pueblo:** The YMCA was already partnering with Steps to strengthen efforts to reduce obesity by increasing the number of physical activity programs in worksites, churches, youth organizations and senior citizens centers. YMCA staff has served on the Steps Executive Committee and the Active Community Environments task force. With these funds, the partnership will be expanded to increase collaboration and enhance community capacity to reach worksites that participate in the YMCA Corporate Cup – through implementation of the Presidents Challenge and the 5-A-Day Challenge. Additional data collection will be added to include pre and post physical and nutrition information about participants.

#### **Steps to a HealthyUS Arizona Project**

**YMCA of Metropolitan Tucson / Santa Cruz County Steps:** An assessment survey, identified by the Santa Cruz County Steps Community Action Plan, will be conducted to determine specific training needs of the community. Based on the results of the survey, an implementation plan will be developed and train-the-trainer programs will be provided to increase long-term advancements in health promotion and wellness programs available in the community. These activities will lead to improved expertise and increased service capacity of the community to support long-term capacity improvements. Results of this project will be included in the Steps overall evaluation plan and used to develop a lessons-learned document.

**YMCA of Metropolitan Tucson / Tohono O'odam Reservation Steps:** An assessment survey, identified by the Tohono O'odam Reservation Steps Community Action Plan, will be conducted to determine specific training needs of the reservation. The survey will be collaboratively analyzed, an implementation plan will be developed, and train-the-trainer programs will be delivered to increase long-term capacity improvements on the reservation for providing health promotion and wellness programs. These activities will also lead to improved expertise and increased service capacity of the community to support long-term capacity improvements. Results of this project will be included in the Steps overall evaluation plan and used to develop a lessons-learned document.

**YMCA of Metropolitan Tucson / Cochise County Steps:** An assessment survey, identified by the Cochise County Steps Community Action Plan, will be conducted in the five communities located within the county to determine specific training needs for these communities. The survey will be jointly analyzed, an implementation plan will be developed, and train-the-trainer programs will be conducted to improve the level of expertise and increase long-term service capacity in the community for health promotion and wellness programs. Results of this project will be included in the Steps overall evaluation plan and used to develop a lessons-learned document.

**Yuma Family YMCA / Yuma County Steps:** The Yuma Family YMCA has been involved with Steps to a Healthier Yuma County since it was initiated. With an alarming increase in Type II diabetes in children, this project will focus on providing an obesity/physical activity intervention program for youth ages 8-14 to prevent the onset of Type II diabetes at such an early age. The “Fit Start for Kids/Teen” program will be jointly designed and implemented by eight local medical and health services organizations in an integrated program of medical services, educational programs and access to health promotion facilities. This program will ensure comprehensive health and educational services are available for youth and families in this mostly Hispanic community.

### ***Tribe:***

#### **Intertribal Council of Michigan**

**State YMCA of Michigan:** The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians and Grand Traverse Bands of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians will work with the State YMCA of Michigan to plan and implement a three-day Youth Wellness Camp for children ages 10-16. The program will provide a fun learning environment focused on lifestyle behavior that will reduce their risk of chronic diseases. The plan is for this program to become an annual event.

**YMCA of Delta County:** The Hannahville Indian Community has been a partner with the YMCA of Delta County for a number of years, in addition to working on the local Steps Community Actions Plan. Their partnership will focus on expanding their cardiovascular exercise program which will increase physical activity and provide information about poor nutrition and second-hand smoke to members of the Hannahville Indian Community.

### ***Cities:***

**YMCA of Greater Seattle / Seattle & King County Steps to Health:** An established partnership will serve as a base to expand programming of the Strong Kids initiative that focuses on youth ages 6-19 and their families. The programming will focus on education and wellness services for improvements in nutrition, increasing physical activity and improvements in self-esteem. The expansion will allow for training of additional YMCA staff to provide this initiative in more YMCAs located in the Steps community. An overarching goal is to make sure the initiative develops into an ongoing basic service of the YMCA.

**YMCA of Greater Boston / Boston Steps:** The Wang YMCA of Chinatown will serve as an implementation point for a collaborative effort in one of the communities identified by the Steps Community Action Plan. The effort will focus on providing educational and promotion information/services for high-risk children and their families in this community. These services will be based on the “Steps to Family Fitness” program that integrates a comprehensive set of wellness and lifestyle habits. This serves as the first time these partners have joined forces.

**Austin Metropolitan YMCA East Community Branch / Steps to a Healthier Austin:** This partnership will work with elementary school children and their families on the “Extended Healthy Kids” program. The Seton-McCarthy Clinic developed a bilingual program that will be used in conjunction with the facilities and programs of the East Community YMCA to help at-risk families. Funds will also be used to improve collection of participant information over a longer period of time. This will allow the partners to determine if individuals continue to participate in health improvement programs after the initial phase.

**YMCA of Greater New Orleans / Steps Together New Orleans:** The YMCA’s Leadership Club will be the focus of this collaboration to identify and work with 90 youth to develop their leadership abilities and learn more about how healthy lifestyles can improve their lives, which will enable them to teach other younger children those lessons. After the youth are certified as YMCA Youth Leaders, they will be placed in New Orleans Recreation Department playgrounds as aides and work with Steps staff to pass on healthy lifestyle messages to children enrolled in playground activities and to families living near the playground. This partnership has already led to the city of New Orleans requesting additional YMCA assistance in working with other playgrounds throughout the city.

**YMCA of Philadelphia & Vicinity / Steps to a Healthier Philadelphia Initiative:** Both partners have an established relationship with the YMCA in providing health and wellness information and programs for communities in North, South Central and West Philadelphia. YMCA staff has been participating in monthly meetings with Steps. Funds will allow the partnership to expand YMCA services to areas mostly populated by racial/ethnic minorities to address family togetherness, exercise and chronic disease prevention activities. These needs were identified in the Steps Community Action Plan for Philadelphia.

**YMCA of Greater St. Petersburg / Pinellas County Steps Initiative:** This established partnership has worked on a number of projects since Steps began in the community. YMCA of Greater St. Petersburg serves on the Steps Leadership team which meets monthly to engage in collective thinking, problem solving and working together in new ways so the impact of all programs is improved. The partnership will focus on working with a local television agency to produce a YMCA / Steps video tool, highlighting the issues surrounding good nutrition, obesity and diabetes. The “Pinellas Step Up” campaign, which the video will be a part of, will run in WIC waiting rooms located in the health department, medical offices, YMCAs and other key community facilities. Also, 12 three-minute testimonial videos will be developed highlighting personal success stories and aired on the local NBC affiliate station. The videos will be broadcast on a non-cable channel with a viewer base consisting of low-income and minority households.

**Central Coast YMCA: Salinas Community YMCA / Steps to a Healthier Salinas:**

Salinas Community YMCA and Steps have an established partnership focused on working with Latino community members in the area of physical activity and nutrition, which were identified as priority areas in the Salinas Steps Community Action Plan. The partnership will expand with these funds being used to focus additional efforts on low-income Latino families who participate in the “Alisal Community Friends” program. This program uses the California “5-A-Day” nutritional plan along with physical activity to engage youth and families in nutritional and fitness education and services. In addition, efforts will begin to integrate nutritional programming into all the branches of the Central Coast YMCA so staff can model healthy lifestyles.